

San Antonio, TX- Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez (TX-23) secured \$3.2 million in funding through the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act for an innovative fuel to protect ground troops. Signed into law by President Bush on Sept. 30, the funding provides for the development and fielding of a new fire-resistant JP-8 fuel for Army ground equipment, both combat and tactical. On Oct. 23, Rodriguez witnessed a test of the fuel at Southwest Research Institute (SRI) in San Antonio.

Rodriguez said "I was impressed by the innovative research that will ultimately save lives on the battlefield. The work done here at Southwest is another example of just how important a role Texans has been playing toward taking care of our nation's troops."

This new fuel is the first realistically deployable, fire-resistant type to be designed for ground troops on the battlefield. The modified JP-8 fuel will self-extinguish, thereby saving lives, reducing severe burns, and reducing equipment loss caused by fire.

"Our troops are under continual threat from IEDs [improvised explosive devices] or roadside bombs," Steve Marty, director of the US Army TARDEC Fuels and Lubricants Laboratory at SRI.

"When using this fuel, the vulnerability to this threat is reduced. Congressman Rodriguez's support for this type of initiative helps bring this technology to the battlefield."

Rodriguez added "While improvements to armored vehicles have better protected our soldiers from roadside bombs, our deployed service members are still vulnerable from burning fuel after blasts. Soldiers, many times covered by third degree burns, are transported to Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, the Defense Department's primary burn center. As of 2006, more than 450 patients with severe burn injuries from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were treated by doctors at Brooke.

"Southwest Research Institute is leading the way in adapting their diesel fuel-proven technology to the fuel used by our troops on the ground, JP-8, which will curb the injuries

suffered by troops."